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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

Rabbi Peter E. Hyman, Temple B'nai Israel, Easton, Maryland, offered the following prayer:

Almighty and merciful God, bless and protect the lawmakers and officials of our land as they carry out the sacred responsibilities entrusted to them by the people of our Nation.

Grant to the President, his counselors, advisers, and all who hold in their hands the destiny and well-being of our country a measure of Your wisdom and a portion of Your spirit.

Impart to those in positions of leadership the courage to temper justice with mercy. Strengthen those who engage in the give-and-take of democracy with passion alloyed with humility.

May those who stand here in righteous debate be ever mindful that Your divine image is reflected in the eyes of those they face; remembering that it is in Your likeness we are all created.

Shield and guard those who, responding to the call of duty and service, stand in harm's way.

Bless, O God, the work of those who labor here, and may the work they do be a blessing to us and to all the world.

And let us say, amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Repub-

lic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING RABBI PETER E. HYMAN

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SESTAK) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. SESTAK. Madam Speaker, I want to talk about Rabbi Hyman who just gave the opening prayer.

There is a midrash, one of the many parables, that embellish upon the Torah. In this particular midrash, there is a man from the land of Israel, a businessman, who was in another country, and when he was there, he was accused of being a spy. He was then told by the judge that he would be executed. He asked for 30 days to go back to the land of Israel and while there finish up his business and come back. The judge initially laughed, but he turned to him and said, "My friend will sit in a jail for me, and if I'm not back, he will be executed."

The judge had to see this, and so the man went into jail. And the gentleman went back to the land of Israel and he finished his business. And he would have made it back in time, except there was a storm at sea.

And when he finally arrived there, the man, his friend, was about to be hung, executed. And he yelled out as he came closer, "It is I who am to be executed, not him." But his friend said, "No, you're too late; it is to be me."

They caused such confusion and commotion that the two men were brought before the king who had to see this, and after listening to their stories, he said, "I will forgive you and pardon you on one condition, that I become your third friend."

There is nothing like a friend in life. You helped me at a hard time, at the beginning of my political career, Rabbi, but more than that, Temple

Shalom in my district radiated that peace, that friendship, that loyalty to everyone, that interracial, ecumenical clergy association you headed, not just Anti-Defamation League, but anti-violence summit that you held.

Shalom. Thank you for being the friend you are, not just to me, but a dealer of hope to many in my district.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 further 1-minute requests on each side of the aisle.

CONGRATULATING STATE SENATOR MIKE CONNOLLY

(Mr. BRALEY of Iowa asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Madam Speaker, I rise today to thank and congratulate my friend and mentor, Iowa State Senator Mike Connolly. Mike has represented the City of Dubuque and Dubuque County in the Iowa General Assembly for the past 30 years. He has also served for 30 years in the Dubuque community schools as a teacher and as an administrator.

When Mike was getting started in the General Assembly, Iowa was facing tough economic times. The farm crisis was challenging the entire State, especially Dubuque, but Mike believed we could rebuild. He is an integral part of the leadership team that has guided the economic and cultural rebirth of Dubuque and Iowa. He has worked tirelessly to make Iowa schools among the best in the Nation, to make health care affordable and accessible, and create sustainable and good-paying jobs.

Madam Speaker, integrity and humility are two trades we could use a lot more of in American politics. Mike Connolly has always served with integrity and humility. He has sacrificed to make his community a better place

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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and kept his actions consistent with his principles.

Senator Connolly, on behalf of all Iowans, I congratulate you on your legacy of service and wish you well in the future.

ENERGY SOLUTIONS

(Mr. WALBERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WALBERG. Madam Speaker, on Monday I had the opportunity to pump gas for some of my constituents in Battle Creek, Michigan. Experiences like these allow me to truly get a sense of what the good people of my district think about energy solutions.

The constituents I spoke with all wanted to know what Congress is doing to lower gas prices. Almost all of them want to see Congress work on an all-of-the-above energy policy.

High gas prices demand action. We need to put all energy options on the table: more drilling, more alternatives, more conservation. This Congress needs to get serious and work on a comprehensive plan that includes all of the above and ends our dependence on Middle East oil.

Sadly, House leadership refuses to allow any votes increasing American energy production. Last Friday, the Washington Post chided House leadership for stifling floor debate on offshore drilling.

Madam Speaker, it is time to engage in a forthright debate that gives the American people a chance to have their voices heard and, most importantly, solves America's energy crisis, ending our dependence on Middle East oil. Let's get it done.

DEMOCRATS ARE PROVIDING SOLUTIONS TO AMERICA'S ENERGY CRISIS

(Mr. STUPAK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STUPAK. Madam Speaker, while Americans suffer pain at the pump, Republicans and President Bush continue every day to spew the same rhetoric about drilling, a move that would produce minimal savings in 10 years.

Democrats, on the other hand, are providing short-term and long-term solutions to America's energy crisis. We have repealed subsidies to profit-rich Big Oil, cracked down on price gouging, and invested in clean and renewable energy.

We realize that Americans are hurting now, and they can't wait 10 years for relief. So 2 months ago, Democrats forced President Bush to stop filling the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. Now we are urging the President to release oil from the Reserve, which would provide relief at the pump within 2 weeks.

Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, President Bush and House Republicans are more interested in doing the bid-

ding of Big Oil than actually providing relief to the American consumer today. How else can you explain their fixation with giving Big Oil more land to drill on when they aren't using the 68 million acres they already have?

Democrats are taking our energy policy in a new direction, not one controlled by Big Oil.

DEFENDING ISRAEL AGAINST IRAN

(Mr. KIRK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, we all know there is a growing Iranian threat, focused mostly on the people of Israel.

Earlier this year, JANE HARMAN joined my bipartisan letter with 70 Members of Congress calling for the U.S. to extend our full ballistic missile defenses to protect Israel.

Last night, the United States announced that we would make this key commitment. Secretary Gates told Defense Minister Barak that the first step will happen soon. America's most powerful radar, the X-Band, will soon defend Israel.

This is a historic step that sends a powerful message to Iran: A future attack on Israel will likely fail. Our two democracies are sticking together to ensure the safety of free peoples, even in the Middle East.

Yesterday's decision by America's defenders makes deterrence, diplomacy, and peace a much more likely future for the people of Israel.

HOUSE PASSES COMPREHENSIVE HOUSING BILL THAT WILL STRENGTHEN HOUSING MARKET AND ECONOMY

(Mr. WILSON of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WILSON of Ohio. Madam Speaker, last week this House passed comprehensive legislation that will assist homeowners facing foreclosure and help strengthen the housing market and our overall economy.

This bill will help significant numbers of hardworking American families in danger of losing their home refinance into lower cost government-insured mortgages, and we can do this at no cost to the American taxpayer.

The bill also helps neighborhoods hardest hit by the foreclosure crisis by providing resources to allow cities and States to buy up and rehabilitate foreclosed properties. Today, these properties are driving down home prices, reducing State and local revenues, and destabilizing neighborhoods.

Madam Speaker, we simply cannot revitalize the economy without addressing our Nation's housing crisis. Last week, the Democratic Congress once again acted on the real challenges facing the American people.

GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF JOURNALISTS

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, journalists should be able to report the news without having to worry about getting arrested for not revealing their confidential sources. Our Nation needs a Federal shield law to further protect the freedom of speech and press.

Recently, several journalists have been arrested and jailed for not disclosing their anonymous sources. These arrests did not occur in foreign countries run by dictators but happened here in America. Putting journalists in jail for not confessing their sources tramples on the Nation's freedom of speech and freedom of the press. These freedoms in the first amendment are first because, without them, the rest are meaningless.

More than 30 States so far have passed laws that protect reporters from being required to testify and name confidential sources, but there is no Federal law.

The job of a journalist is to report the news and not be an arm of the government or controlled by our government. Law enforcement officials should not force journalists to gather information or find witnesses.

A free press means free and independent of government intrusion into the sources of reporters.

Madam Speaker, the country needs a Federal shield law because, instead of getting a reporter arrested, the truth should set them free.

And that's just the way it is.

TRIBUTE TO NICK DONOFRIO

(Mr. WELCH of Vermont asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Madam Speaker, it is my great pleasure to pay tribute to Mr. Nick Donofrio who is retiring after 40 years of serving the IBM Corporation.

Nick has led many of IBM's major development and manufacturing teams, semiconductor and storage technologies, microprocessors, and personal computer servers. He's led the semiconductor development and manufacturing facility in Burlington, where he and his wife, Anita, raised two children, Nicole and Michael.

Throughout his career, Nick has focused sharply on advancing education, employment, and career opportunities for underrepresented minorities and women.

He served on boards in Vermont. He's received national awards, well-deserved, for his leadership. The National Education and Leadership Award from the Sons of Italy Foundation; the Mensforth International Gold Medal; Industry Week magazine's Technology Leader of the Year; the University of